



WATER RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2023
7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

Present: Barry Rosen, Ron Parenti, Mike Geis, Joe Robb, and Matt Mostoller

Chairperson: Joe Robb

Clerk: Ron Parenti

Others in Attendance: Alissa Nicol (Select Board Liaison), Kim Kastens, Terra Friedrichs, and David Boccuti

1. Opening

WRAC chair Joe Robb opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

2. Regular Business

- A. Public Remarks/Comments -- None
- B. Review Minutes –A motion to approve the minutes for 22 August was made by Matt Mostoller and seconded by Mike Geis. The minutes were approved unanimously without modification by a roll call vote.
- C. Discussion of Reverse Osmosis Home Filtration Systems – Ron Parenti initiated the discussion by reminding Committee members that he had written an article for Action Unlimited to assist homeowners who wished to install a home filter to reduce PFAS levels in their drinking water. The article noted that the use of reverse osmosis (RO) systems is illegal in Massachusetts when the wastewater is discharged to a septic system. This agenda item had been requested by Alissa Nicol, who had heard that some Acton residents have had reverse osmosis systems installed by Bluedrop (South Easton, MA) and Papalia Home Services (Boxborough, MA). The wastewater volume generated by the reverse osmosis process is typically two or three times larger than the filtered output, and the concern is that the increased discharge into a septic system could cause the system to fail. This may not be a significant concern for under-sink systems, but all types of RO systems are currently prohibited in homes with septic systems and violate Title 5 regulations. Matt Mostoller commented that other types of discharge into a septic system are also prohibited, such as the output from water softeners. David Boccuti informed the Committee that filters certified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) for PFAS removal have a demonstrated ability to reduce concentrations from very high levels to 70ppt, which is the old EPA guideline. The ability of these filters to comply with the new MassDEP regulation of 20ppt has not been documented. With regard to actions that WRAC might take to discourage additional RO installations, Nicol suggested that the Committee consider an outreach to local installers to remind them of the State regulations. Kim Kastens noted that State legislators have discussed the difficulty of



enforcing existing regulations at recent forums devoted to drinking water issues. Matt Mostoller indicated he did not believe the WRAC should focus its efforts on this particular issue.

- D. Update on Zoning Report – Barry Rosen informed the Committee that the zoning report is in the final revision stage, and that he and Joe Robb are hoping to discuss the document with the Select Board on 16 October. Alissa Nicol commented that the mailing cost would be about \$2,100, and that the portion of the printing and mailing costs that would be paid by the Water District would be negotiated after the presentation to the Select Board. Nicol suggested that the WRAC’s presentation include specific examples of instances where a better knowledge of the zoning restrictions would have saved homeowners or developers time and money.
- E. Response to Comments on the Great Road Study Draft Report – Ron Parenti reported that he sent WRAC’s comments on the Great Road study to the Town Manager on 28 August, and requested a progress update from the Town’s Public Works Department on 11 September. QinRui Pang returned a response indicating that Wright-Pierce had received the Committee’s comments and is preparing a response. Alissa Nicol informed the members that Wright-Pierce will be discussing their report with the Select Board during the Sewer Workshop on 27 September, and that WRAC members would be invited to attend. In response to a question about public participation in the Sewer Workshop from Terra Friedrichs, Nicol responded that the primary purpose of that meeting is to educate and inform the Select Board in their role as Sewer Commissioners. The slides presented at the workshop will be made available to the public.
- F. Any Other New Business -- Terra Friedrichs asked if the WRAC intended to expand upon the Great Road study and engage in a larger water study for the entire Town. Joe Robb responded that the WRAC had initially planned to ask the Town for funds to perform a more expansive study, but that the recent discussions about a connection to MWRA may obviate the need for such a study. Barry Rosen detailed some of the issues that will impact the Water District’s decision on the connection question. Kim Kastens requested that the WRAC include a discussion of the process for making a decision about an MWRA connection in a future meeting agenda.

3. Adjournment

Committee members agreed to hold the next meeting on 12 October 2023 at 7pm. A motion to adjourn was made by Barry Rosen and seconded by Matt Mostoller. Adjournment was approved at 8:30 pm by a unanimous roll call vote.